

In re Patent Application of
MARIAUD ET AL.
Serial No. 09/990,629
Filed: NOVEMBER 16, 2001

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the careful and thorough examination of the present application, and for the indication of allowable subject matter. By this amendment, independent Claims 7, 13 and 22 have been amended to further clarify the features of the present invention. Claims 18-21 have been canceled, and new Claims 27-29 have been added. Claims 7-17 and 22-26 remain pending in the application. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

I. The Invention

As shown in FIGS. 6-8, for example, the disclosed invention is directed to automatic monitoring of the input terminal VBUS while avoiding the regular and frequent intervention of the microcontroller program. The device of the invention automatically controls a voltage Vcc applied to one of two data conductors of a USB type serial link cable in a peripheral apparatus connected upstream to another apparatus. The logic control circuit connected to the memory operates the supply voltage source only if the stored logic value indicates that the second voltage is present, to protect the second peripheral apparatus from receiving the first voltage via the first conductor wire of the USB when the second voltage is not present.

II. The Claims are Patentable

The Examiner maintained the rejection over new prior art references, Rothenbaum (U.S. Patent No. 6,128,743) in view of Lee (U.S. Patent No. 6,516,418) for the reasons set forth on pages 2-4 of the Office Action. The Examiner again

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indicated the allowability of the subject matter of Claims 8, 14, 19 and 23. Applicants contend that Claims 7-17 and 22-26 clearly define over the cited references, and in view of the following remarks, favorable reconsideration of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 is requested.

As discussed in the previous response, the Rothenbaum patent is directed to a bus hub for connection via a serial bus to a serial bus host hub. A switch switches the bus hub between being powered by the power supply and being powered by the power from the serial bus host hub by switching the mode of operation between self-powered mode and bus-powered mode. As correctly recognized by the Examiner, the bus hub does not include a memory associated with the detection circuit and storing a logic value indicating the presence or absence of the second voltage received on the second wire of the USB. Additionally, as acknowledged by the Examiner on page 4 of the Office Action, the Rothenbaum reference does not teach the protection of a peripheral device.

The Lee patent relates to a portable computer system, i.e. a laptop computer, with universal serial bus port or ports and a method for controlling power of the universal serial bus port. The Examiner correctly pointed out that the system of Lee includes a memory which stores an enabled state or disable state of the USB port. However, as in the Rothenbaum reference, there is no teaching of a memory associated with a detection circuit for storing a logic value indicating the presence or absence of a second voltage received on a second wire of the USB.

Again, as acknowledged by the Examiner on page 4 of the Office Action, the Lee reference also does not teach the

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protection of a peripheral device, as in the present invention. The memory in Lee is used to define whether the USB port is activated or not, independently from the state of any peripheral device.

Thus, even if the hypothetical combination of teachings asserted by the Examiner were obvious to the skilled artisan, the combination, as admitted by the Examiner, cannot meet the features of the invention as now claimed.

Thus, there is simply no teaching or suggestion in the cited references to provide the combination of features as claimed. Accordingly, for at least the reasons given above, Applicants maintain that the cited references do not disclose or fairly suggest the invention as set forth in Claims 7, 13 and 22. Furthermore, no proper modification of the teachings of these references could result in the invention as claimed. Thus, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should be withdrawn.

It is submitted that the independent claims are patentable over the prior art. In view of the patentability of the independent claims, it is submitted that their dependent claims, which recite yet further distinguishing features are also patentable over the cited references for at least the reasons set forth above. Accordingly, these dependent claims require no further discussion herein.

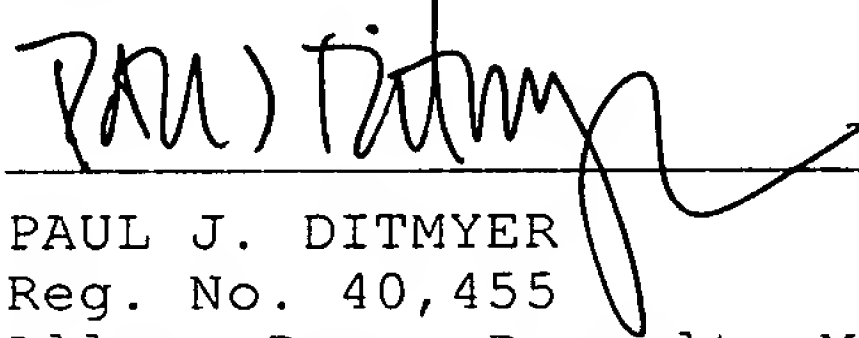
III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. An early notice thereof is earnestly solicited. If, after reviewing this Response, there are any remaining

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informalities which need to be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, the Examiner is invited and respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone to resolve such informalities.

Respectfully submitted,



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